

VZCZCXRO3838
PP RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDBU RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLH RUEHLN
RUEHLZ RUEHNEH RUEHPW RUEHROV RUEHRS RUEHVK RUEHYG
DE RUEHAH #0397/01 0891015
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 301015Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2562
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 5008
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2764
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2629
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 3252
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 3425

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ASHGABAT 000397

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/CEN; DRL

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [TX](#)
SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: HUMAN RIGHTS DONORS HAVE LOTS OF
PLANS IN THE WORKS

REF: ASHGABAT 198

11. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for Internet
distribution.

12. (SBU) On March 26, the UNDP office in Ashgabat hosted a
donor sub-group meeting on democratization, rule of law and
human rights. Participants were representatives of UN
organizations, diplomatic missions, and other international
organizations. The purpose was to share information about
current and planned projects and coordinate efforts in order
to "move ahead in Turkmenistan." Inita Paulovica, the UNDP
Deputy Resident Representative, mentioned that holding donor
group meetings was a condition of EU funding for UNDP's Human
Rights project that is just beginning (reftel) and would be
convened on a bimonthly basis.

13. (SBU) Donors took turns describing their projects. The UK
will support a media training program, assist in setting up
an ombudsman system to handle citizen complaints, and work
with German GTZ on penal reform efforts, including rewriting
the penal code and study trips aboard. UNDP mentioned its
current ombudsman project and UNICEF recalled its 2005
cooperation with Sweden to promote an ombudsman, which had no
lasting result. GTZ stated its goal for a draft revised
penal code by the end of 2009. It will also conduct a needs
assessment on judicial training and received "informal
support" from the Supreme Court for a project to publish
judicial decisions. Finally, GTZ will conduct training for
lawyers at the regional level in cooperation with the
Ashgabat Lawyers Association. In addition to the EU-funded
Human Rights project, the EU will also support a legal reform
project tied to the possible adoption of an EU Interim Trade
Agreement with Turkmenistan. A focus will be the
introduction of international arbitration law, the
requirements of which are clearly laid out and rigorous. The
EU representative suggested that the legal training for this
project could have a positive spillover effect for rule of
law more broadly. OSCE will pursue media training for young
journalists and training in human rights standards for
lawyers, judges, law faculty and penitentiary officials.
They will also work to build the Government's Institute for
Democracy and Human Rights' (IDHR) capacity to address

citizens' complaints.

¶4. (SBU) UNDP will continue its Democratic Governance program through capacity building at the local level in the run-up to this summer's local council elections. It's working with an interministerial group to draft a revised local government law. UNDP will also begin capacity building at the district level this year, meaning it will be promoting democratic reform at all three levels of Turkmenistan's Government structure. In the area of electoral support they are working to develop a unified electoral code and conducting grassroots civic education and training for journalists aimed at effective coverage of local elections.

¶5. (SBU) It was noted that Turkmenistan's Universal Periodic Review process was complete and that the Government is now supposed to follow-up on the recommendations. The Government will report this year on its compliance with the International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights. This provides an opportunity to encourage the Turkmenistan Government to address the situation of civil society in structural ways that could result in a long-term improvement. The Government will also report on compliance with the UN Convention Against Torture.

¶6. (SBU) COMMENT: One result of the EU-funded Human Rights project will be these donor group meetings, scheduled to take place bimonthly. Given the significant overlap in some of the initiatives, and the IDHR's central role as almost everyone's Turkmenistan government partner, it will be interesting to observe how implementation of this ambitious

ASHGABAT 00000397 002 OF 002

agenda proceeds over coming months. END COMMENT.
MILES